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Omani Naval Activities off the Southern Arabian Coast in the Late 11th/17th Century, from Yemeni Chronicles

INTRODUCTION

Oman and the Yemen during the 10th/16th century had been affected by the irruption of the Portuguese into the Indian Ocean and the development of their great maritime empire. Even earlier, the Yemen had been exposed to the Mamlūk expansion down the Red Sea coast in 1515 – this was swiftly followed by the Ottoman Turks who conquered it as part of their imperial venture, both attracted by the country's reputed riches[1] and to counter the Portuguese blockade of the trade-routes to India. Muscat was early occupied by the Portuguese and strongly fortified. It was an unhappy experience for the Arab population for Mamlūk, Turk and Portuguese were cruel, perfidious and rapacious.

The Zaydī Imāms of the Yemen succeeded finally in expelling the Ottomans from their coastal ports by 1045/1636. A few years later with the capture of al-Mīrānī[2] Fort, or Fort Capitan, by Sulṭān b. Sayf, Oman was able to assert its own authority in Muscat. The Omanis in fact went on to revenge themselves by carrying war into Portuguese possessions in India and East Africa, raiding Bombay, Diu and Mombasa. The impetus of these movements swept along these two dynasties on a wave of acquisition of territories formerly independent or semi-independent. It was almost inevitable they should come into collision.

The Omanis are a maritime as well as an agricultural and pastoral people and their strength lay in their sea-power, whereas the Zaydī Imāms derived their authority and support from their influence with the war-like tribes of the northern mountains – landsmen without a sea-coast. In this respect they differed from the Rasūlid Sulṭāns of Ta'izz of the 13th to mid-15th centuries who were able, through control of the sea, to exert their influence along the southern coast of Arabia to the extent of levying an annual tribute from the coastal ports, Ẓafār, al-Shiḥr and other smaller places, known collectively as Bilād al-Tafārīq (a term also known to later Ottoman documents), havens for the India trade fleet. They even maintained a naval force to combat pirates. The Zaydīs do not seem ever to have built up a navy. Local uprisings brought loss of their sea-ports and thereby loss of revenue, which in turn rendered them unable to pay subsidies and probably played a considerable part in their decline in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

The clash between Oman and the Yemen first came over Ẓafār province that had been held by petty semi-independent dynasties such as the Ḥabūẓīs and Manjūwīs. But, as the Ḥaḍramī

historian, Shanbal,[3] records under the year 807/1404–5, 'Āl Kathīr took Ẓafār and expelled the Sulṭān . . . and Ibn Aḥmad b. Jassār went up to them and they agreed that Ẓafār should be halves between [Sulṭan] Rāṣi' and Āl Kathīr.'

THE KATHĪRĪ SULṬĀNS

The Kathīrī tribe, belonging to the Ḍannah/Ẓannah, rose from historical obscurity, gradually extending their control over Wādī Ḥaḍramawt from Ẓafār. From about the last twenty years of the 8th/14th century they provided Ḥaḍramawt with Sulṭāns, but, following the universal pattern of ruling houses, they soon fell into dispute over the succession. This led to intervenion in their affairs by the great Zaydī Imām of the Yemen, al-Mutawakkil (1054–87/1644–76).

This started with the event recorded by the chronicle *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*[4] under the events of the year 1064/1653–4 which states that 'in it Badr b. 'UMAR,[5] Lord of Ḥaḍramawt, al-Shiḥr and Ẓafār, made the Friday address in the name of the Imām (*khaṭaba li-'l-Imām*) and his nephew, Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH,[5] arrested him and his chiefs of state (*kubarā' dawlati-hi*), deposed him from power and placed him in irons.'

This bold statement is amplified a little by a modern historian, Sayyid Muḥammad b. Hāshim.[6] Sulṭān Badr b. 'UMAR, he says, being plotted against by his nephew, tried to bolster up his position by friendly alliance with the Imāms of the Yemen. It was rumoured he had embraced the Zaydī rite and, in 1058/1648, Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH seized him and imprisoned him in Maryamah near Saywūn. At the same time he released his own brother, Ja'far, from prison and made him governor of Ẓafār.

There is a discrepancy of six years between the two accounts, but the date given by *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* seems to accord better with the circumstances.

When al-Mutawakkil heard of Badr b. 'UMAR's deposal he wrote in 1064/1653–4 to the usurper instructing him to release his uncle and give him the governorship of Ẓafār. Much correspondence[7] passed between them but Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH ultimately fell in with the Imām's command. Alarmed by al-Mutawakkil's success against the warrior Yāfi'ī tribes he notified the Imām of his submission, promised to give the Friday address in his name and pay the obligatory taxes (*al-zakawāt al-wājibāt*); he also paid him a tax on the revenue from the Indian trade-fleet at al-Shiḥr. A letter[8] from him to al-Mutawakkil dated about 1067/1656–7 contains some interesting details about Ẓafār – it is couched in obsequious terms.

'We own a well[9] in Ẓafār from the time of our father and it belongs to us. From a servant (*khādim*)[10] of ours who oversees it we have heard that Parent[11] Badr (*al-wālid* Badr [b. 'UMAR]), has entered into its (the well's) concern. The reply from us to the servant was that he should leave it to him even though it belongs to us.' He adds that the affair of the well is a small matter to him but Badr b. 'UMAR's place in his esteem is high, and both he and his uncle have properties there come down to them from their families. Badr b. 'UMAR's sons, he says, had left in anger by ship for Mahrah country because of this well and after their departure Sulṭān Badr b. 'UMAR sought protection (*rab'*)[12] from the soldiers (*'askar*) and Āl Kathīr [tribes] and they gave him protection (*rabba'ū-h*).[12] This he did, feeling insecure at the departure of his sons. Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH however emphasizes that he had given his uncle 'complete security'. He had handed over to him bandar Ẓafār, land and sea, plain and hill (*barr-an wa-baḥr-an, sahl-an wa-wa'r-an*),[13] with its high impregnable forts (*ḥuṣūnu-hu 'l-'āliyah al-manī'ah*), except for a few negligible forts,[14] and he had got witnesses to attest to his having done this.

'As you are aware,' runs Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH's letter, 'we send ships on voyage there for gain (*nawāl*)[15] and we purchase frankincense (*lubān*) like strangers,[16] but now, if Parent (Badr b. 'UMAR), God preserve him, wishes we should stop frequenting the bandar with our ships as strangers do we shall leave this off, seeking thereby your goodwill and his, but if he likes us to be among the various sorts of people there is no harm (in that).' . . . 'Our Lord, the Com-

mander of the Faithful, God preserve him, knows that in Ẓafār there are copious running streams (*ghuyūl*)[17] and one fifth (*khamīs*) is collected by assessment[18] from the [land irrigated by] the streams, from which provision is supplied for those who work the incense (*ya'malūn al-lubān*) – this had gone to Parent (Badr b. 'UMAR) before his entering upon this well. It is correct that now Ẓafār in its entirety, the streams and the rest have passed to him.' Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH suggests in tactful terms that the Imām should look into this case.

The affair of Ẓafār was however not allowed to rest and events took a new turn. Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH told his brother Ja'far that since the Imām has snatched Ẓafār from us and handed it over to our uncle there is not sufficient of the country left to us to provide our customary dues (*'awā'id*).[19] This caused Ja'far to betake himself to the Imām's court in the Yemen but he appears to have obtained nothing there so he returned to Ḥaḍramawt and seems to have conspired with his brother to take Ẓafār from their uncle Badr b. 'UMAR, with whom however Sulṭān Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH remained outwardly friendly. Ja'far gave out that he was bound for India and Oman (*jihāt al-Nu'mān*)[20] but collected a number of scoundrels (*awbāsh*) with whose aid he managed by a ruse to enter Ẓafār and occupy its fortress. Badr b. 'UMAR took refuge with some of the Bedu, then moved to the coast where he took ship to Mahrah country and thence to Aden. Arriving at the Imām's court in 1069/1658–9, he was well received and al-Mutawakkil wrote to Sulṭān Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH saying that he was 'at the side of Sulṭān Badr b. 'UMAR and he is of us, so that whatever offences are committed against him are also committed against us.'[21]

THE ZAYDĪ EXPEDITION AGAINST THE KATHĪRĪS IN ḤAḌRAMAWT

Al-Mutawakkil now resolved on mounting an expedition against Ḥaḍramawt,[22] al-Shiḥr and Ẓafār, appointing as general his nephew, Ṣafiyy al-Islām Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan. The Zaydī forces caried out a remarkable campaign across difficult and dangerous country through territories held by warlike tribes. They proceeded from Mārib and Bayḥān to Aḥwar on the southern coast and thence by Wādī Daw'an to Wādī Ḥaḍramawt, arriving in the western part of the wādī in Sha'bān 1070/about mid-April, 1660, from which they entered its towns one by one. Ṣafiyy al-Islām was accompanied by Badr b. 'UMAR and the latter's nephew Sulṭān Badr b. 'ABDULLĀH came in to tender his submission to the Zaydī and was sent to Ṣan'ā'.

Al-Jarmūzī[23] reports that Ṣafiyy al-Islām heard that the Lord of Ẓafār, *i.e.* Ja'far the Kathīrī, had called in the people of 'Ahl Nu'mān', 'their rite being that of the Khawārij[24] who dislike the People of the House (the Sayyids), on them be peace, but they also dislike the people of al-Shiḥr on account of their sinful actions (*ma'āṣī*),[25] and they overcame this afore-mentioned Ja'far over Ẓafār.' The modern author, al-Jirāfī,[26] confirms that Ja'far, in 1070/1660 had sent an invitation to the Omani Amīr Khalaf[27] to enter and take Ẓafār. Ja'far in fact seems to have conducted himself badly for he had confiscated goods belonging to merchants of al-Kunj or Kung, a little to the north east of Lingeh, which he tried to sell in the Yemen as his own property. In general it may be surmised from the tone of the histories that for a local ruler to defraud merchants in ports on the southern trade route would affect the interests of the lords of the other ports which derived revenue from the Indian trade fleet and shipping from the Gulf.

Ja'far's letter had provided a way out of a serious difficulty for the ruler of Oman. Letters from Sulṭān al-Hind and Sulṭān Fāris[28] had been despatched to Ṣāḥib al-Nu'mān, as the Yemeni historians call him, instructing him to attack Ja'far al-Kathīrī – or else you will be at war with us! While it was a grave matter to disobey those monarchs it was awkward for him to attack Ẓafār which had come, however remotely, under Zaydī suzerainty. Now the Omani ruler could claim justification for taking Ẓafār.

In Ḥaḍramawt, after setting things to rights, Ṣafiyy al-Islām found himself in an uncomfortable even dangerous plight. The produce of the country was inadequate to provision his troops.

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The Imām moreover had instructed him to leave their customary dues (*'awā'id*) to the Ḥaḍramī sulṭāns and accept submission, outward obedience and adherence (*i'tizā'*) 'to this Muḥammadan state and 'Alawī group'. His horses, camels and money were nearly exhausted and he had long been awaiting supplies from the Imām but he realised that the latter was unable to send him adequate supplies because of his own preoccupations nearer home in the Yemen.

Al-Nu'mān[29] (*i.e.* the Omani Amīr) in Ẓafār, after ejecting Ja'far al-Kathīrī, wrote to Ṣafiyy al-Islām to the effect that Allah had empowered them over this misguided fellow. 'We have expelled him from this bandar and you have discretion (*taṣarruf*) over him and us.' The Omanis made a show of obedience, and Ṣafiyy al-Islām 'replied approving what they had done, (adding) that what was wanted was to clear the land of the like of such a nefarious character (*fāsiq*) as this – or whatever he actually did say'. 'Had he wished to attack them,' says al-Jarmūzī,[30] 'he would have been unable to do so on account of the great distance between Ḥaḍramawt and Ẓafār, for it is about eighteen days for the post (*barīd*) and it would be more than a month for baggage (*athqāl*) since these are deserts with little water'. He would also have needed supplies which would have had to be collected from Ṣan'ā'. So he accepted outward obedience from them. It was easy for al-Nu'mān to obtain supplies for his soldiers. After making arrangements in Ḥaḍramawt Ṣafiyy al-Islām returned from Saywūn to Ṣan'ā'.

Ja'far would of course have won the Imām's displeasure for displacing his uncle Badr b. 'UMAR, but, at the close of Ramaḍān, 1071/about the end of May, 1661, Badr b. 'UMAR and Ja'far came to an understanding and the latter asked his uncle to mediate in obtaining a safe-conduct from the Imām. Later in the same year we find Ja'far arriving with the Faḍlī Shaykh[31] at the Imām's court.

At the close of Rajab, 1073/about early March, 1663, the Amīr of Ẓafār, acting for the Omani ruler Sulṭān b. Sayf, is reported by *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*[32] to have been in a confused and disturbed situation, for 'That stronghold (*ma'qil*) continued to be (like) a gash in their throats and a black flag in their market because, in relation to Ḥaḍramawt and Oman it occupies the place of the centre (bead) in a pearl necklace and they [the Kathīrīs] were considering Khalaf (the Omani Amīr) to have intruded upon Ẓafār'.

They (the Kathīrīs?) made raids on Khalaf, killing about forty of his men whom he had sent to demand accession to (certain) demands. So Khalaf fled by sea, leaving only two cannon in Ẓafār. Sulṭān Muḥammad b. Ja'far the Kathīrī entered Ẓafār, changed its statutes[33] and laws and transferred the (Friday) address to be conducted in the name of the Zaydī Imām (*baddal qawānīnahā wa-'l-aḥkām, ḥawwal al-khuṭbah li-'l-Imām*).

The Omani (Sulṭān) was vexed at this news, saying that he had sent his Amīr to this 'wretched district' in response to the appeal of the Kathīrī only (*talbiyah li-dā'ī 'l-Kathīrī*) for 'with our ample dominion and victorious state (*dawlah*) we have no need of this country'. It may be that the author of *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* is here drawing on Sulṭān b. Sayf's letter, written several years later, to supply an appropriate reaction on his part to the bad news from Ẓafār.

At this point it is necessary to establish the identity of the Omani Sulṭān or Ibāḍī Imām who was responsible for the action against Ẓafār and subsequently the maritime actions against Zaydī ports. S. B. Miles[34] has indicated that 'there is much discrepancy concerning the date of the death of the Imām Sulṭān b. Sayf'. He cannot have died in 1059/1649 as some Omani historians maintain since the Yemeni *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*, unconscious of any controversy, dates his famous letter, translated below, to 1080/1669, and it might conceivably be as late as 1090/1679 as given by Sir Edward Ross.

Sulṭān b. Sayf, for reasons unstated, took no action for a number of years to recover Ẓafār and engaged in no hostilities against the Kathīrīs or their overlord the Zaydī Imām – very likely he was fully occupied with affairs elsewhere. Nor do the Yemeni chronicles consulted record any interest taken by the Zaydī Imāms in Ẓafār until, towards the end of Dhu 'l-Qa'dah 1079/early summer, 1669, al-Mutawakkil despatched the shaykh Zayd b. Khalīl to govern Ẓafār of

Ḥaḍramawt. He arrived in al-Shiḥr and sent his son there and, after that, his first lieutenant his *mawlā*, al-Ḥājj 'Uthmān b. Zayd arrived at the Imām's court.[35]

OMANI NAVAL ACTIVITIES OFF THE SOUTHERN COASTS

For over a decade the *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* now records Omani raiding along the southern coasts and into the Red Sea to Mocha. While the Omanis were animated in part by their hate of the Portuguese they also sought plunder. This was an age when the Indian Ocean swarmed with pirates. For the Yemenis security of the shipping using their ports seems to be more important than considerations of religion or race; as already stated, the Imāms had need of the revenues from the customs at Mocha and Aden.

'At the new moon of Dhu 'l-Ḥijjah, 1079/about May 3rd, 1669,[36] the Omanis appeared off the coast of Aden and Mocha to plunder. They accomplished their aim by attacking three large dhows (*jilāb*),[37] these being such belonging to the Furanj (Franks)[38] as had arrived at the Gate[39] of the Harbour (Bāb al-Furḍah). The Franks defended their property and a number of them perished, slain. The Nā'ib of Mocha was unable to repulse them on account of their numbers, for they arrived in seven large ships (*birāsh*),[40] although he had brought in voluntary help (*ghawā'ir*)[41] from Zabīd and elsewhere against them and petitioned a reinforcement of picked troops from the Imām, but they did not arrive until the (Omanis) had already gone, with such property as they happened (to take). The bandar became unsafe (*ḍa'ufa*) because of this sortie (*khārijah*)[42] and some of the vessels took themselves off to Juddah. . . . At the close of Dhu 'l-Ḥijjah/May news arrived that the Omanis, on their return journey had reached the borders of the coast of Mahrah country, then entered and plundered it. They laid waste (*'āthū*)[43]the island of Socotra, robbed it, seized its shaykh, brought their sharp swords to drink of his head and returned, may God disfigure them, to their country.'

'In 1080/about June, 1669, a group of those Omanis passed by (*ṭāsha?*)[44] to Jīzān on the track of the vessel of Bā Yazīd[45] because it had bypassed Mocha. So they followed it in expectation, on their part, that they would return with it, but it gave them the slip (by going on) to Juddah. The people of Jīzān fled from them when they put in (to it). Then they left it, what they supposed having proved false.'

A month or two later after this event news from Ḥaḍramawt arrived in the Yemen that twenty large vessels (*barshah*) of the Portuguese had raided to Oman in retaliation for the Omani assault on Diu the previous year – in which some Muslim merchants had lost their property.

THE LETTER[46] OF IMĀM SULṬĀN B. SAYF TO IMĀM AL-MUTAWAKKIL OF THE YEMEN AND HIS REPLY

In Rabī' I, 1080/August, 1669, a letter from 'the king of Nu'mān', Sulṭān b. Sayf, arrived at al-Mutawakkil's court. While al-Sālimī merely prints the letter and the Zaydī Imām's reply without introduction, comment or date, the *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* places the letter in its historical context and also, incidentally, provides the evidence that Sulṭān b. Sayf was still flourishing at this date.

Couched in the rhymed prose and ornate epistolary style of the age the precise sense the writer wishes to convey is not always easy to determine, and on a number of points I am not quite certain of the translation. In its English rendering the style is inevitably sometimes clumsy. The texts differ only on minor points – the text followed is that of *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* but where al-Sālimī's readings have any significance they have been inserted between square brackets.

From the Imām of the Muslims, Sulṭān b. Sayf [b. Mālik], Head of the Arabs, the Ya'rubī, [the Arab, the 'Umānī] – to the Apogee, the August Majesty, the Heroic Noble Ismā'īl b. al-Qāsim, al-Qurashī, al-'Arabī.

To proceed –

[Here follow the customary introductory praises of God]

If, dear friend, you ask about us and desire to learn of us exactly how our condition is, we are,

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by God's grace, in a condition whereby a person affected (to us) will be rejoiced but the envious vexed.

Then, may you know, (Honoured King and Exalted Lord (Sayyid)) that, over a period of days already elapsed and months already pierced,[47] there reached us a man from Your Majesty averring that, by his hand, you sent sheets containing pearls consisting of your superlative words and speech, but he says that the vessel in which he came was rendered unseaworthy by wreck and foundered at sea, so that sentence of destruction befell the written sheets[48] there. However he has restored[49] them to us through what his tongue produced and, from his clear utterance and exposition, it has become plain to us that you reproach us and are angered with us because of the interception last year by our servants of the [ships of] the Polytheists [themselves][50] at your Gate (Bāb),[51] and because they seized their ships which were proceeding to Your Majesty.

By my life, we know that reproach between friends is the preface to sincere love and affection and increased genuine sincere amity and good faith, though this must be (accompanied) by avoiding the commission of offences and violation of the inviolable. For our part we have followed[52] no path to committing those things, nor do we find you have evidence to attach the commission of such things to us, seeing that we did not despatch our vessels and prepare our hooks[53]for a ship[54] of your subjects, nor to plunder people under your rule and authority, but despatched armies and soldiers and made ready keen cutting swords to destroy the idolaters[55] and foes of (God) the Conquering King, by way, on our part, of seeking the favour of the Lord of the Universe and revivifying the Sunnah of his Trusty Prophet, being desirous of obtaining the reward/virtue of those who endure, fighters of the Holy War.

Far be it from such as you to be angered at combatting idolaters and foes of God and Islam! Are you not of the stock of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib who gave the Polytheists poisoned potions to drink. You are aware of the bloodshed, the many violent assaults and the plundering of possessions and property, the one by the other, that took place formerly between us and them on the Oman coasts, as well as other places and countries. Indeed we seize them everywhere their vessels put in and to which they come, even of Kung and Gombroon[56] the Shah's two ports, without his evincing reproach or disapproval of us on this account.

Certainly, o King, we remind you, for reminding profits the Believers,[57] and 'we are of those who warn you'[58] and of those who warn you to take care, that when we took possession in those days of the town (*balad*) of Ẓafār, though it is remote from us by waterless and barren deserts, we saw no virtue in retaining possession of it for any thing that scrutiny on our part deemed essential and that sense and reflection could relate. So we abandoned it – not out of fear of a conquering force or clear unity[59] against us, vanquishing hands or robbing palm.

At the time when our governor, Khalaf, withdrew from it he left behind some cannon of the Muslims, through negligence on his part[60] to transport them at that time. When you took the nose-ring of its strong she-camel[61] and looked upon the shining of its full moon and sun you did not hand those cannon over to us – just as if they had no one behind them to ward off and defend (them). You must be aware, o King, that the husband is jealous, the lion crushes, and the free man is forbearing over anything but insult! He who warns is exonerated and whosoever gives warning is not acting treacherously!

Yet, notwithstanding, we seek to reconcile the difference between you and us, being desirous of preserving your friendship, extinguishing dissensions and chosing to suppress hatreds[62] between you and us. If you desire what we desire and want what we want, give them back, God bless you,[63] to us, and do not sip, through swiftness of aggression, the outburst of wrath (occasioned by) it.[64] If (on the contrary) you refuse aught but the course of appropriating them as a prize, and so to go lampless at night (thereby losing your way), freedom of action and power lie in seeking the help of God. Whosoever is with God, God is with him.[65] Peace upon you and the mercy of God.

The reply[66] of Imām al-Mutawakkil, or, as al-Sālimī calls him, the King of Ṣan'ā', follows.

From the Sun of the Lofty Heavens of the Caliphate and site whereon the pavilions of the Muḥammadan Sharī'ah are pitched – to the distant land[67] of the Ruling King, Sulṭān b. Sayf b. Mālik al-Ya'rubī, the Arab, the 'Umānī, may God show him the way of guidance[68] and let him avoid the road of error and deviation.

To proceed –

God's praise, blessing and peace be upon His Trusty Prophet and His Legatee, the Valley-filling Torrent, the Large-bellied[69] whose sword harvests the heads of heretics.[70]

Your letter which you have charged with thunderings and lightnings has arrived, and in which you have turned away from setting the reproach to rights to (enter into) rude declamation, from presumption on your part that your babble of threats and the buzzing of flies of your menaces would shake one solid rock of our might or stir one lofty mountain of our dignity. But how could that be (when)

Upon our swords, in all East and West,
Are dents from the clash with mailed men.

Where has your contentiousness taken (you) so that you demand the cannon from us with these false tales and *baqāqi'* (?).[71]

Things coveted only get men's heads cut off. Do you not know that the lion when excited against its prey is more violently audacious, bolder and more resolute? Certainly it is because your lands and ours are far distant and countries intervene between us that you have given free rein to your tongue and gone beyond your limit in low estimation (of us) and (because) you are segregated in your land that you seek to thrust and do battle alone.

O you who tread among the keen swords and spears,
I sniff the smell of blood upon you.

So cut off the ties of your aspirations to these cannon for, if God will, they are the first booty from your remote province. You have summoned us to accept the decision of the edge of the sword and blade of the spear, (but)

Wait a little and battle/the she-camel on heat will come up with the camel.

We belong to those people who, on the Day of Nahrawān,[72] gave your people to drink of the cups of death, and you are the successors of those who were made to drink. By what our ancestors started with your forbears we shall put a terminus to whomsoever remains. Peace.[73]

Commentary

The sectarian differences of the Ibāḍī and Zaydī schools of Islam are clearly reflected in the language of the letters. Both rulers are styled 'Imām' by their sects, yet neither addresses the other by this title. Sulṭān b. Sayf does not even address the Zaydī ruler by his adopted title, al-Mutawakkil, but simply as 'August Majesty'. He describes him as al-Qurashī al-'Arabī, but makes no allusion to his descent from the Prophet, though he does cite his ancestor 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib as a worthy model for him. Both rulers use the title 'King' in addressing one another. They follow the Sunnah or the Sharī'ah.

Al-Mutawakkil is incensed at the violation of Mocha by Omani vessels attacking the Portuguese there. This Sulṭān b. Sayf rejects, pointing to the Omani policy of attacking the Portuguese wherever they find them. From other sources we know that this attitude did not extend to the Dutch and other Christian powers.

The *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* scorns Sulṭān b. Sayf's assertion that Khalaf left Ẓafār at his Lord's wish. If so he would not have left the cannon behind. In point of fact, he says, 'He only went out of Ẓafār through the unexpected attack upon him by the Kathīrī Sultan's army (*bi-mā dahima-hu min jaysh al-Sulṭān al-Kathīrī*).' He informs us that al-Mutawakkil ordered the two cannon to be released, but adds that the person in charge of the reply to Sulṭān b. Sayf was not really fitted to do so and he remarks snidely on the promotion that kings (unwisely) give to clerks (*kuttāb al-inshā'*). Probably for this reason he does not quote the text of the reply but it is given by an anonymous marginal commentator who thinks that the author of the *Ṭabaq* takes an extreme view of the writer who is, he adds, the very learned Qāḍī

Aḥmad b. Ṣāliḥ b. Abi 'l-Rijāl,[74] of the well-known family of scholars.

If Sulṭān b. Sayf's letter is outspoken and quick to rebut al-Mutawakkil's charges with vague threats it nevertheless offers the possibility of conciliation. Al-Mutawakkil's rejoinder on the other hand is couched in aggressive and, to an Ibāḍī, highly offensive terms with references to 'Alī's action to suppress the Khawārij in language reminiscent of such accounts of the latter one finds in early writers like al-Mubarrad.

THE DECLINE OF ZAYDĪ INFLUENCE IN ḤAḌRAMAWT: PORTUGUESE AND OMANIS IN THE GULF OF ADEN AND RED SEA

In Rajab, 1080/late November to December, 1669,[75] 'a violent sea battle fell about between the Omani and the Franks. In its initial stages the wind of victory was with the soldiers (*jund*) of the Omani, then the Frank rounded on them and killed about two hundred of them – the rest were routed. Then the Franks settled to making havoc (*ya'ūthūn*) for some days until such of them as did came out to Mocha'.

'This year the people of Ẓafār revolted, killing seventeen of the best of the Imām's men, and the Amīr of the state (*al-dawlah*),[76] the son of Shaykh Zayd b. Khalīl, was besieged but held possession of it. The Imām's consideration (of the situation) came down on the side of sending his slave, al-Ḥājj 'Uthmān b. Zayd, to Ḥaḍramawt for the lieutenancy (*li-'l-niyābah*) of it. Shaykh Zayd b. Khalīl recalled his son from Ẓafār and they came out together to the court. As for Ẓafār one of the Kathīrī Sulṭāns (al-Dawlat al-Kathīriyyah) gained mastery over it, relying ostensibly on the Exalted Court (*al-Ḥaḍrat al-'Aliyyah*). The Imām had offered the governorship of the country of Ḥaḍramawt with its appanages to his nephew Sharaf al-Islām al-Ḥusayn b. al-Ḥasan but he refused this on the advice of his brother Ṣafiyy al-Islām [Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan], so he sent one of his officers (*muqaddam*),[77] but no objective of his was achieved.'

At the end of Dhu 'l-Ḥijjah, 1080/about May, 1670, 'the governors of Ẓafār and Ḥaḍramawt arrived at the Imām's court and he cast the dice (*?qara'a 'l-dast*)[78] in favour of the kings of it (Ḥaḍramawt), Āl Kathīr, and none of the Imām's governors remained except the faqīh Amīn al-Dīn al-Qurashī in al-Shiḥr, and when the Imām perceived that the age was not conducive for initiating an expedition (*takhrīj*) against those far regions he passed them over to the governorship of Sulṭān 'Alī b. Badr, making him the blaze on its [Ḥaḍramawt] brow, apparently conferring a benefit upon him, and pretended to forget it entirely'.

Of this Sulṭān, 'Alī b. Badr, Muḥammad b. Hāshim[79] tells us that the Qarā tribes were not in complete subjection to the power of Ẓafār and by their natures liked their freedom, so that the governors of Ẓafār had often to turn a blind eye to their rebelliousness (*tamarrud*) and had to take to wheedling them. 'Alī wanted to subdue and conquer them but in the end he had to make peace with them along the lines they wished and after that the Āl Kathīr governors had no firm footing in Ẓafār. Little by little the power of the Zaydī Imām in Ḥaḍramawt, al-Shiḥr and Ẓafār declined until all that remained to him was the address (*khuṭbah*) in his name in all the Jāmi' mosques.[80]

To return now to the Yemen, al-Jirāfī[81] says that 'in the year 1081/1670–1, a large body of the Christians of the Portuguese arrived at Bāb al-Mukhā and announced to the governor (*ḥākim*) Sayyid al-Ra'īs al-Ḥasan b. Muṭahhar al-Jarmūzī[82] that they intended to declare war on him because he had not defended them against the people of Oman in the past year so that they attacked them. Indeed a body of the Portuguese did advance from Qal'at al-Faḍlī which is now ruined, but the force from around the guardposts (*min ḥawl al-makhāfir*)[83] faced them and the Portuguese fell back on their ships and were compelled perforce to return to their country. Then at that time commenced the construction of the Mocha forts (*qilā'*) as a protection for the town against the recurrence in future of such an event'.

In 1082/1671 the *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*[84] reports that the Franks, presumably the Portuguese, entered Socotra of the Bilād al-Mahrah and (the Mahrah)

made a truce with them through inability to fight them and they settled (*sakanū*) in a place of it called Qishn (on the Arabian mainland). The Imām intended to send the Shaykh Zayd al-Hamdānī on an expedition against them, but he heard of Muḥammad Shāwūsh's expedition from Egypt to Mecca and abandoned the idea.

In 1083/1672–3[85] news arrived of a truce between the Lord of Oman and the Portuguese (Burduqāl), and he found relief from their afflictions.

In 1084/1673–4,[86] 'letters arrived from the Mahrī, Lord of the island of Socotra and the Ḥaḍramī coast lying between al-Shiḥr and Ẓafār appealing for the Imām's regard (*yastad'ī 'ināt al-Imām*) and (stating) that he had already resolved upon taking him as Imām (*?al-i'timām*)[87] and that his reason for this seeking of a link with him was that, in the past, some of those men of the Omani who had come to the coast of Socotra island had plundered it'. He had fled to the coast of al-Shiḥr, 'and the Amīr of the Omani had entered his country but not managed to get hold of what he had hoped since he (the Socotri) had taken with him what he had and those with him'. He laid all that pertained to him before the Imām. But the Imām was advised to deal with more important matters, 'for the Mahrī has only made proposals to you in order to cure this ache!' The Imām in fact had plenty of his own troubles in the Yemen itself.

Possibly because of the settlement with the Portuguese the Omanis seem to have been free to raid the Yemen once more. During the last ten days of Dhu 'l-Qa'dah, 1084/9th March onwards of 1674,[88] 'news came to the Imām that the Sulṭān of Oman had despatched an expedition of large ships (*birāsh*) to Mocha and his mind became preoccupied with this along with trouble (*fitnah*) coming in that had taken place between Āl 'Ammār and Duhmah, as well as the disturbed state of the 'Awlaqī and his independence on his own'. This was followed by news coming to the Imām in Muḥarram, 1085/early April, 1674, that 'the Omani's men (*aṣḥāb al-'Umānī*) had newly acquired Socotra island this year, killing a group of its inhabitants in cold blood. These days the Oman people made havoc (*'āth*) at sea and their large ships followed the Bāniyān (Hindu vessels) to Bāb al-Mukhā and hastened to plunder them, tossing a number of them into the waves, but the people of Ṣīrah and Aden rose[89] against them and forthwith fired muskets and zebratanas at them. These scoundrels (*awbāsh*) were routed and the rest of the large ships joined up with the routed party until they (re-)assembled at Bāb al-Mandab with munitions and soldiers – after which they held up comers and goers. Ṣafiyy al-Islām's victorious[90] troops (*junūd manṣūrah*) fired at them and his son, al-'Izz, aided him with his victorious army[91] until God quenched their keen swords and exterminated them by the swords of the Angels to the last man. Praise is God's'.

'In Ṣafār, 1085/May–June, 1674,[92] the Imām despatched his slave the gallant (*fatā*) 'Uthmān [b. Zayd] to bilād al-Shiḥr of the coasts of the land of Ḥaḍramawt at the head of three hundred of the soldiery (*'askar*) and entrusted him with preserving the bandar from the Omani from apprehension of such (attacks) as had already come from them (the Omanis).' 'News arrived this year[93] of the wreck of a large Omani vessel (*barshah*) off the coast of Aḥwar as its crew were returning from the Aden coast. Most of its crew perished with its cargo – those who were saved came to the coast and the Aḥwar people robbed them and killed some of them.'

In Shawwāl, 1086/approximately late December, 1675,[94] 'news arrived that the Omani's large dhows (*jilāb*) had put to sea, containing soldiers (*'asākir*)'. Several events are recounted by *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* which then goes on to say, 'During this time the arrival of the Omanis at Bāb al-Mandab was confirmed so Ṣafiyy al-Islām Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan hastened to despatch Sayyid al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥurrah at the head of a body of able men (there ?) and to despatch Ibn Madhbūr to Jabal al-Faḍlī.'[95] This coincided with news of troubles with the 'Awlaqīs and Duhmah.

In al-Mutawakkil's last year (1087/1676) the vessels arrived at bandar Mocha with a present from the Emperor Awrangzib for the Imām and a gift (*ṣadaqah*) for the Ashrāf of the Yemen[96] – which is perhaps some indication of his standing. *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā* also remarks, rather cryptically,

that the Omanis, come to complain (*al-shākūn*)[97], left the Imām's court for their country in a cordial atmosphere (*'alā wajh jamīl*) but he did not accede to their actual demands. After the accession of his successor the Ḥaḍramī Sulṭān is recorded[98] to have sent a gift to the Imām and delivered his allegiance (*bay'ah*).

No troubles with Omani raids are mentioned by *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*[99] until the close of Rabī' I, 1090/ about May 11th, 1679 when 'the first of the Indian vessels arrived at Mocha – the Omani's men had intercepted them at Bāb al-Mandab and tithed/ taxed them (*'ashsharū-hum*) there'. This seems to imply a change in the policy of the Oman sea-rovers from piracy to the exaction of protection money – unless perhaps they were simply not in sufficient strength to attack them. A little later, in Jumādā I/June 10th to July 9th) of the same year,[100] 'news arrived from the governor (*'āmil*) of Aden, Shaykh Rājiḥ, in which he said that a vessel from Masulipatam (Māsh līf tān) had arrived off the Aden coasts and that its crew were afraid of the Omani's soldiers (*jund*), so they sent to him at dead of night to reinforce them with men and aid them with brave men (*abṭāl*). He did as they said, and when the vessel was fixed up with the Indians and those troops (*junūd*) aboard it they had scarcely time to think after daybreak before the Omani's soldiers pounced on them in astonishing guise and set to dragging the vessel with grapnels (*kalālīb*) – whereat disaster overwhelmed them for they did not realise that the affair has already been decided by night and that the bullets of destiny were skirmishing with them. "And they called out and it was not a time of flight." [Qur'ān, XXXVIII, 2]. This business of theirs resulted in the slaying of twenty-five men and rout of the rest. So when the Omanis realised their powerlessness and the Pleiades (al-Thurayyā) rose at dawn, they returned by choice and perforce to their country. God's is the praise'.

In the Mss. and printed books used I have found no further allusions to Omani naval action off the Yemeni coasts. Al-Mahdī Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan was strong enough to send an expedition over the sea from Mocha to take Zayla' in 1107/1695–6 and must have had some control over the seas in this area, but it could be that the Omanis, being increasingly concerned with East Africa, lost interest in operations against Yemeni ports.

A *qaṣīdah* composed by Khalaf b. Sinān al-Ghāfirī on the conquests of Sulṭān b. Sayf is quoted in part by al-Sālimī.[101] These include Mocha on which the poet puns. 'So, too, in Mocha he sucked the marrow of their bones (*Ka-dhā fī Mukhā qad imtakhkha min-hum a'ẓum-an*).' He turned away with a number of their ships (*aflāk*) which looked like mountains: at Bāb al-Mandam[102] much blood (shed by the Omanis) was unavenged, much property taken. 'There is history of these raids,' says al-Sālimī, 'which has not been collected in books (*dafātir*).' It would be interesting to have versions of the events described by the Yemeni chroniclers here, from Omani sources.

APPENDIX 1

The important issue of security for the Indian shipping using Yemeni ports may be appreciated from measures[103] taken by al-Ṣafiyy subsequent to Hubert Hugo's assault in 1078/1662 on vessels at Mocha as recounted in my *Portuguese* (122 seq). In this the Omanis were not involved.

When al-Ṣafiyy arrived in Aden the merchants of India came to him and he treated them with friendliness, giving them places of honour and precious gifts. During the two months he stayed in Aden two vessels put in there, one called al-Sawākinjī (margin, Kunḥ sawā ī), and the other al-Markab al-Ṣāḥibī, *i.e.* the Queen of Bijapur, Barī Ṣāḥibah's vessel. These were the largest that ever put in to Aden – each with a cargo of 400 bales (*bandalah*) and 1,500 persons.[104] So large was each bale that the Gate of the Harbour (Bāb al-Furḍah) was not wide enough to admit its passage and they could only be brought in by the Coast Gate (Bāb al-Sāḥil). The Indians prepared a feast for Ṣafiyy al-Islām and his entourage the like of which they had never experienced, but on discovering to their dismay that it was prepared by the Bāniyāns, the Barāhimah, they vomited it up! When the 'Īd arrived Ṣafiyy gave a splendid and varied banquet to his chiefs to which the notables of the Indians were also invited. He inspected the port (*al-bandar al-sa'īd*) and found much of it in poor state, so he collected builders (*'ammār*) from Yāfi', the Yemen and Ṣan'ā', and rebuilt the walls.[105] When this was completed he sent for the chief men of the Indians to whom he made presents, 'for each *nākhūdhah* a horse, and he wrote to the Sulṭān, the Lord of India, and sent one of his men along with them with five noble Arab horses and their trappings, gear ornamented with silver, and a gift similar to this to the ministers. Then he sent to the Lord of Barr al-'Ajam (the African coast), the Lord of Ẓafār, the Amharī and the Lord of Ḥaḍramawt, and established regulations (*qawā'id*) for the people of those

countries to which they assented, and (confirmed?) demands which they named.'

Ṣafiyy al-Islām's actions may be interpreted as intending to conciliate the India merchants and to promote good relations. It would have been interesting to know what were the regulations that he established, and perhaps they may have been part of some generally recognised body of maritime customary law but this is an open question.

APPENDIX 2

To Mr St.John Armitage who knows Ẓafār/Dhufar as it was during the reign of Sultan Qaboos's father, very well indeed, I am indebted for the following valuable notes on the production and trade in frankincense and the part played in this by Āl Kathīr and Bayt Kathīr, (writer's transliteration retained).

'The main marketable frankincense production comes from Qara territory. In 1956 the Sultan told me that the best production of *luban Najdi* came from 'behind', to the north and north east of Taqa where Jabal Qara and Jabal Samhan meet. Except for some very poor incense near Raisut, all the incense grows at an altitude of 2,000–3,000 feet; there are poorer quality gums at lower altitudes.

Al Kathir in Dhufar are mainly settled cattle owners who have a kind of enclave in Qara territory in Wādī Girziz between Salalah and the Najd. They are assimilated into the mountain life and very distinguishable from Bait Kathir. They and the Qara own most of the incense groves. However frankincense also grows in Bait Kathīr (the nomads who, with the Rawashid are 'Aiyal Hamdan of Āl Kathīr) territory, mainly the higher reaches of the wadis on the northern slopes of Jabal Qara. The Bait Kathir tribes roam these wadis westward to Habarūt (except for Bait Musan of Bait Kathir who have the plains to Mugshin and sands to Ghanim).

Now:

(*a*) Some Bait Kathir also own and collect frankincense. Its sale used to be the bonus which would buy their rifles and other luxuries.

(*b*) Some Bait Kathir also rent groves from the Qara as do the Bait ash-Shaikh (the Mashayikh) – the rent used to be half the produce. The Baniyans from Salalah would purchase the Qara's portion, even by marked tree (a custom which may have ceased).

(*c*) Qara, Al Kathir (including Bait Kathir) and Mahrah (settled in Dhufar) gather incense. The owner of the tree gets ten per cent of the value of the crop. Also a few Rawashid (Al Kathir) used to come to Dhufar for the frankincense collection season, *i.e.*, the summer months before the monsoon.

(*d*) the Al 'Amr (as they call themselves) are an offshoot of the Bani 'Amr of Oman and hold sway from Murbat to Hasik. They are much involved in the incense trade from Murbat. The latter was of course always of importance as a trading port because of its proximity to the Qara/Samhan groves. (I think that people from Murbat used to participate in the collection.) The recent war put the emphasis on Murbat as the main incense centre at Salalah's cost.

So, whilst I feel sure that the Al Kathir have had a place in the market because they have the *luban Najdi* area of their own and access to the Qara's crop, they do not have a monopoly – unless times have changed of course.

The *ghuyul* are, or rather were, open running streams developed from the *'uyun* (springs) of Rizat Girziz, *etc.*, but, in living memory, only Rizat was used for irrigation – of Sa'id bin Taimur's gardens at al-Ma'amurah and now, I think, at the Royal Farm. However the scale upon which two of the *ghuyul* once irrigated land between the RAF camp and the hills can still be seen from the air.

Al-Hafah, the village in the west between Salalah and al-Balid, ruins, was probably an important anchorage. I have heard Taqa referred to as Bir Taqa and there is a Qara connection, Bait Ma'ashani, with incense.'

NOTES

[1] *Cf.* Salih Özberan, 'A Turkish report on the Red Sea and the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean (1525)', *Arabian studies*, London–Cambridge, 1978, 81–88. 'Should it be conquered it would be possible to master the lands of India and send every year a great amount of gold and jewels to Istanbul.'

[2] The other fort is al-Jalālī.

[3] Quoted from my unpublished edition of his *Tārīkh*, but see Ṣāliḥ b. 'Alī al-Ḥāmid al-'Alawī, *Tārīkh Ḥaḍramawt*, Juddah, 1388/1968, I, 684, quoting Shanbal. Rāṣi' b. Duways is of the Āl Yamānī Sulṭāns.

[4] *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā wa-ṣiḥāf al-mann wa-'l-salwā*, of Sayyid 'Abdullāh b. 'Alī al-Wazīr, Chester Beatty Ms. no. 4097.27 b.

[5] Since the two Kathīrī Sultans are both called Badr capitals are employed for the father of each to make the distinction between them a little clearer.

[6] Sayyid Muḥammad b. Hāshim, *Ḥaḍramawt; tārīkh al-Dawlat al-Kathīriyyah*, Cairo, 1367/1948, 70. Only limited reliance can be placed on this history.

[7] The correspondence is reproduced *in extenso* by al-Jarmūzī, *al-Sīrat al-Mutawakkiliyyah*, Ms. in the Sulṭān's Library, al-Mukallā, for which see my *Portuguese off the South Arabian coast*, 2nd ed., Beirut, 1974, 112.

[8] *Ibid*, 213.

[9] A *bīr* in Ḥaḍramawt means the land attached to the actual well.

[10] In Ḥaḍramawt the *khaddām al-nakhl* is the labourer who looks after a palm plantation; perhaps this is what is meant here.

[11] *Al-wālid* is apparently used as a title of respect.

[12] *Rab'* in this sense is not attested in the lexicons, but in C. de Landberg, *Glossaire daṭînois*, Leiden, 1920–42, 1074, *rabba'a* = protéger, as also in Ḥaḍramawt.

[13] These are clichés of a type that figures in local legal documents.

[14] *Ḥuṣūn* are also used as dwellings.

[15] Dozy, *Supplément*, salaire, solde. Landberg, *Études . . . Ḥaḍramoût*, Leiden, 1901, 728, ce qu' on reçoit, bénéfice.

[16] That is, presumably, without any special concessions.

[17] In the Yemen a *ghayl* is often an underground channel like the Persian *karīz*, *qanāt*. At Ghayl Bā Wazīr in Ḥaḍramawt there are also underground *ghayls* of this type.

[18] *Wa-ṣurra bi-'l-khurs. Cf.* Landberg, *Ḥaḍramoût, op. cit.*, 562, *yakhrus al-māl*, taxe, estime la récolte.

[19] Muḥammad b. Hāshim, *op. cit.*, 70.

[20] *Ibid*, 71. Yemeni chronicles frequently use al-Nu'mān for Oman. This is probably derived from the Nu'mān district of al-Barkā' where there is a castle, Bayt Nu'mān, built by Bil 'Arab the Bū Sa'rar, near the coast. *Cf.* S. B. Miles, *Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf*, London, 1919, under Naaman.

[21] *Ilā jānib al-Sulṭān Badr b. 'UMAR fa-huwa ilay-nā wa-inna 'l-wāqi*[i]*fī-hi min al-jināyāt 'alay-nā.*

[22] Al-Jarmūzī, *op. cit.*, 225 seq.

[23] *Ibid*, 258.

[24] *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*, 24 a, describes the Ibāḍīs as holding the tenet (*qawl*) that the imāmate has no specific rank/principle (*manṣib*) – on the contrary it is suitable (*ṣāliḥah*) for all people along with piety (*taqwā*) as Nashwān and the Khawārij hold. *Ibid*, 18 a–b, describes other tenets of the Khārijī-Ibāḍīs. Ibāḍīs reject the view that they are Khawārij. See Sālim b. Ḥammūd b. Shāmis al-Siyābī al-Samā'īlī, *Aṣdaq al-manāhij fī tamyīz al-Abāḍiyyah min al-Khawārij*, ed Sayyidah Ismā'īl Kāshif, Cairo, 1979, Ḥamīd b. Muḥ. b. Ruzayq, *Sīrat al-Sādah al-Bū Sa'īdiyyīn*, ed. 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Āmir and Muḥ. Mursī, Cairo, 1397/1977, 508, where it is stated to the Shāh of the time, 'We are not the Khawārij. The Khawārij are the extremists (*ghulāt*) of us in ancient time. We have separated from them in ancient and modern time.'

[25] These would include such as are mentioned by al-Jarmūzī, 257, the open sale of wines (*khumūr*) in al-Shiḥr *sūqs*, upon which the Kathīrī Sultan collects a tax (*qānūn*). He alludes also (216) to (musical) instruments, usury (*ribā*), which the Zaydīs attempted to abolish, and (256) the involvement of the Kathīrīs in Ḥaḍramawt with usury.

[26] 'Abdullāh b. 'Abd al-Karīm, *al-Muqtaṭaf min tārīkh al-Yaman*, Cairo, 1370/1951, 162.

[27] Al-Jarmūzī, 258, calls him 'Āmir b. Aḥmad.

[28] *Ibid, loc. cit.*, the Moghul Emperor and the Shah?

[29] *Ibid*, 259.

[30] *Loc. cit.*

[31] *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*, 45 b.

[32] *Ibid*, 49 a–b.

[33] *Qawānīn* might be 'duties/taxes' here rather than 'statutes'.

[34] *Op. cit.*, I, 214.

[35] *Ṭabaq*, 78 a.

[36] *Ibid*, 78 b.

[37] *Cf.* my *Portuguese, op. cit.*, 135, sing., *jalabah*, but perhaps this is too restricted a description.

[38] The vocalisation is that of the Ms. These are the Portuguese.

[39] See my *Portuguese*, 123, plate 7 showing Mocha Road about 1720. I am inclined to identify the Gate (Bāb) with the mooring place between the ends of the two capes. The plate does however show an actual Gate to the town. It has not been possible to identify it from E. Macro, 'The topography of Mocha', *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, London, 1980, X, 55–66.

[40] *Cf. Portuguese*, 134. A *barshah* is a large ship, but it can also mean a galliot, long covered boat.

[41] It is suggested that this word means *ghārah*, syn., *najdah*. *Yā ghāratah* is the exclamation used in calling for help, and *ghawwar* means to call for help. *Cf. San'ā': an Arabian Islamic city*, London, 1983, 145.

[42] This sense has no lexical support.

[43] Or 'made havoc of'. *Tāj al-'arūs, afsada wa-akhadha bi-ghayr rifq.*

[44] *Ṭabaq*, 79 a, has *ṭāsa*, and Jīzān is restored from a word transcribed without diacritics.

[45] Bā Yazīd will be a Ḥaḍramī.

[46] *Ṭabaq*, 80 b seq.; E. Griffini, *Rivista degli studi orientali*, Roma, 1910, III, 912, no. 119, *Kitāb Ṣāḥib 'Umān ila'l-Imām al-Mutawakkil 'ala 'llāh Ismā'īl b. al-Qāsim, al-Imām Sulṭān b. Sayf*, printed in Nūr al-Dīn 'Abdullāh . . . al-Sālimī, *Tuḥfat al-a'yān bi-sīrat ahl 'Umān*, Cairo, 1347 H., II, 56 seq.

[47] *Takharramat*, used for the rhyme, a little difficult in the context.

[48] Reading the printed *al-ṭurūs* for *Ṭabaq, durūs*.

[49] Reading *afā'a-hu* for *afā-hu* of al-Sālimī.

[50] Perhaps to be translated as 'the Polytheist slaves', by way of insult to them.

[51] Bāb al-Furḍah ?

[52] Al-Sālimī has *naqṣid* for *nasluk*.

[53] *Reading nattakhidh* with al-Sālimī. By 'hooks' he probably means grapnels, but *makhālib* also means claws, talons.

[54] *Sayyārah*, a deep sea vessel. Al-Sālimī's *yasārah* appears corrupt.

[55] S. B. Miles, *op. cit.*, I, 214–5, alludes to the profusion of images looted or smashed when the Omanis entered the church at Diu.

[56] *Ṭabaq* has a word without diacritics which could be read as J m b rūh; this would agree with the Turkish *Jahân Numâ* which calls it 'Gumrû'. Al-Sālimī reads Jīrūn. G. Le Strange, *Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, Cambridge, 1930, 319, Jirūn (*sic*) is an island near Old Hurmuz. Gombroon is modern Bandar 'Abbās.

[57] Qur'ānic diction though not Qur'ān.

[58] Qur'ān, XXVII, 92, *Inna-mā anā min al-munadhdhirīn*.

[59] This is to understand *kalimah* in the sense of *kalimah wāḥidah*; *ẓāhirah* rendered as 'clear' can mean 'victorious'.

[60] Al-Sālimī omits 'on his part'.

[61] Al-Sālimī reads *'īs*, tawny-white camels.

[62] Al-Sālimī reads *miḥan*, tribulations.

[63] Al-Sālimī omits the blessing.

[64] Reading with al-Sālimī, *lā taḥtasi*. He seems to mean the wrath that swiftness of agression would rouse in the Omani Sultan.

[65] Al-Sālimī adds, *Wa-ḥasbu-na 'llāh wa-ni'ma 'l-wakīl*.

[66] The text used is al-Sālimī, II, 85.

[67] *Qāṣiyat arḍ*.

[68] This phrase may convey a subtle insult for a Jew converted to Islam is known in Zaydī Yemen as *muhtadī*, guided, and of course al-Mutawakkil would regard Ibāḍīs as heretics.

[69] *Al-Baṭīn*, stout, is an epithet of 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib in a complimentary sense.

[70] *Māriq*, heretic, as in Sunnī accounts of the Khawārij.

[71] This word has not been traced in the lexicons.

[72] The battle at which 'Alī defeated the Khawārij.

[73] The version on the margin of *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*, concludes with blessings on the Prophet, his Family and the Companions. The allusion to the Family, the Sayyids, would seem to have been distasteful to al-Sālimī, being an Ibāḍī, and to have therefore been omitted by him.

[74] Muḥammad al-Shawkānī, *al-Badr al-ṭāli'*, Cairo, 1348 H., I, 59–61, says he was born in al-Ahnūm in 1029/1620 and died in 1092/1681, a well-known scholar and author of a work on biographies of noted Zaydīs.

[75] *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*, 82 b.

[76] Local sulṭāns who broke away from the Zaydī Imāms come to be styled *dawlah*.

[77] In Ḥaḍramawt *muqaddam* means a chief.

[78] *Cf.* F. Rosenthal, *Gambling in Islam, Leiden*, 1975, 32–3, *qur'ah*, casting of lots to decide equal claims. *Dast* in Persian can mean 'dice'.

[79] *Op. cit.*, 87. He died in 1107/1695–6. Perhaps it was he who had gained mastery over it in 1080/1669.

[80] *Ibid*, 88.

[81] *Op. cit.*, 164.

[82] Author of *al-Sīrat al-Mutawakkiliyyah*. His brother is in Muḥammad . . . Zabārah, *Nashr al-'arf*, Cairo, 1359–77 H., I, 505 seq. *Cf.* note 7 *supra*.

[83] See *makhfar* in Wehr's *Dictionary*. By the 12th century H. Mocha is recorded as having a *tarskhānah*, arsenal (*Nashr al-'arf*, I, 575).

[84] 91 b.

[85] *Ṭabaq*, 96 b.

[86] *Ibid*, 100 a.

[87] Lit., 'to take as a pattern', but the suggested sense seems appropriate here.

[88] *Ibid*, 100 b – 101 a.

[89] Reading *tanaqqaḍa*. Ṣīrah island is of course on the right of Aden Bay and has mediaeval fortifications.

[90] *Manṣūrah* is a conventional epithet for troops.

[91] *Jaysh al-manṣūrah*, incorrectly?

[92] *Ibid*, 102 a.

[93] *Ibid*, 102 b.

[94] *Ibid*, 106 b.

[95] Both these names lack diacritics, but see Qal'at al-Faḍlī *supra*.

[96] *Ibid*, 107 a.

[97] Reading dubious. Imām Sulṭān b. Sayf did however send to Ṣan'ā' for horses and arms for the Muslims though dates for this are not mentioned, and this may explain the presence of Omanis in the Yemen.

[98] *Ibid*, 112 a.

[99] *Ibid*, 122 a.

[100] *Ibid*, 122 b.

[101] *Ibid*, II, 61–2.

[102] A common variant for Mandab.

[103] Al-Jarmūzī, *op. cit.*, 318–9.

[104] Even allowing for the crowding on pilgrim ships this does seem an enormous number.

[105] Some important detail is given on the rebuilding of parts of Aden.

ADDENDUM

P.84/11 The printed *Ṭabaq al-ḥalwā*, Ṣan'ā', 1406/1983, 258, records the Imām's release of the cannon, but without comment.